DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 012 CS 010 530

AUTHOR Wolter, Sharon Kaiser
TITLE The Reading-Writing Relationship: The Effect of Reading Dialogue Journals on Seventh and Eighth Graders' Reading Comprehension.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 77p.; M.S. Thesis, Iowa State Univesrity. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Association for the Education of Young Children (Des Moines, IA, April 17-20, 1991). Best copy available.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Dialog Journals; Grade 7; Grade 8; Junior High Schools; Middle Schools; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Improvement; *Reading Instruction; Reading Research; *Reading Writing Relationship; *Student Journals
IDENTIFIERS *Expressive Writing; Fort Dodge Community School District IA

ABSTRACT

A study investigated whether students instructed in the use of dialogue journals in reading classes would show a significant increase in reading comprehension as compared to students who did not use dialogue journals in reading class. Subjects, 77 seventh- and eighth-graders in an Iowa School, were assigned to either experimental or control groups. Students in the experimental groups wrote in their dialogue journals instead of doing workbook pages or skillsheets. Groups met with their reading teachers 42 minutes per day for five months. Results showed highly significant differences between the means of the scores from the two groups, indicating that reading methodology which incorporates expressive writing results in significant improvement in students' reading comprehension. (Five tables of data are included and 62 references are attached. Appendixes include letters to students and parents.) (SR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED331012

The reading writing relationship: The effect of reading dialogue journals on seventh and eighth graders reading comprehension

by

Sharon Kaiser Wolter

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department: Professional Studies in Education
Major: Education (Curriculum and Instructional Technology)

Approved:

Elmer Yarak
In Charge of Major Work

For the Major Department

For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1986

CS 010 530

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Sharon Kaiser-Wolter

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background	2
Statement of the Problem	9
Hypotheses	13
Definitions	13
Summary	13
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	15
The Reading Writing Relationship	16
Journals	21
Expressive Writing	27
Learning Characteristics of the Middle School Child	28
Summary	31
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY	33
Target Groups	33
Testing	34
Treatment	36
Delimitations of the Study	39
Summary	40
CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA	41
Introduction	41
Demographic Data	41
t Tests	43

Page

Analysis of Covariance 46

Summary 48

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 50

Introduction 50

Conclusions 50

Discussion 53

Recommendations 60

BIBLIOGRAPHY 62

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 67

APPENDIX A: HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM 68

APPENDIX B: COVER LETTERS 70

APPENDIX C: TREATMENT PLAN HANDOUTS 73

APPENDIX D: RELEASE FORM 84

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 1.	Demographic data (N = 77)	42
Table 2.	Mean scores of the total sample on the Gates-MacGinitie Pre- and Post-Tests	43
Table 3.	t tests	45
Table 4.	Analysis of covariance of experimental and control reading comprehension achievement measured by Gates-MacGinitie percentile rank on the post-test	47
Table 5.	Analysis of covariance of experimental and control reading comprehension achievement measured by Gates-MacGinitie standard score on the post-test	47

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

An important development during the last decade in the field of language arts has been the integration of reading and writing. As a result, researchers, theorists, and teachers are coming together to share each other's research and expertise.

Applebee (1977) states that whether reading is presented first or writing first, one has a positive influence on the other. He also states that correlations among various language skills stem from their mutual dependence upon syntactic maturity. In other words, reading-writing experiences tend to improve each other.

Goldsmith (1981) believes the distinctions of reading and writing blend into each other so that one definition serves for both--both are the creation of meaning. In the act of creating meaning, readers become writers and writers become readers.

Researchers have begun to detail ways in which reading, writing, and oral language support each other in language development. There is growing evidence to substantiate the idea that producing a written message brings together reading and writing processes. As children integrate knowledge from both reading and writing, connections are made between the sound combinations of the words they were trying to decode in graphic symbols and what was actually on the page (Sulzby & Teale, 1985). Thus, reading and writing are not separate processes in a child's learning, nor do they develop sequentially. Instead, the two processes are mutually supportive and are intimately related to oral language.

Young children develop as reader-writers, not as one or the other (Aulls, 1985).

Background

A major objective in any classroom reading program is the development of reading comprehension. This development is critical to the success of each child because comprehension skills directly affect the ability of the child to derive, interpret, and apply meaning in an effective way (Ruddell, 1984).

John Carroll (1984) states the essential skill in reading is getting meaning from a printed or written message. Joanna Williams (1984) says comprehension of meaning from a written text--often expressed in terms of processing the information--is the ultimate goal of reading.

What is comprehension? Available research indicates it involves a cluster of related mental or thinking abilities, rather than a single mental process. These thinking abilities include vocabulary knowledge, understanding of word meanings, ability to draw inferences, and seeing the intent or purpose of an author, judging the mood or tone of a selection, and perceiving the literary devices by means of which the author accomplishes his purposes (Bloom, 1956 as cited in Ruddell, 1984).

Frank Gusznak of the University of Texas reports that approximately 70% of teacher question time is devoted to literal detail-type questions and only 30% to questions of an interpretive, applicative, or evaluative nature. Gusznak believes the absence of higher-level questioning actually leads the student away from the basic understanding of story plot,

events, and sequences.

A study involving reading comprehension was conducted by Delores Durkin, a researcher affiliated with the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois. This study was designed to find out what kind and what amount of reading comprehension instruction was taking place in grades 3 to 6. Durkin observed teachers in 39 classrooms in 14 school districts during their reading and social studies lessons--a total of 16,997 minutes. Everything done during these minutes was timed, noted, and documented. Durkin found that there was no comprehension instruction during any social studies period despite the admitted difficulty of the texts. Of the 11,587 reading minutes observed, only 45 were devoted to teaching comprehension skills beyond talking about the meaning of specific words and giving directions for comprehension exercises. She state, "Teachers use practice exercises to teach comprehension and if that does not work, the solution seems to be to have the pupils do more exercises" (Durkin, 1978-79).

Richard Anderson, a director of the Center for the Study of Reading, states that learning to read and comprehend in today's schools is a matter of completing a seeming endless stream of work-book and ditto-page exercises (1983).

Attempts have been made by educators and the publishers of many basal reading series to increase the time spent on reading skills. A widely used basal series used in many school districts nationwide, divided the reading comprehension skills included in its K-8 program into 367 subskills with mastery and testing at each level. More class time

was required for the testing than the actual instruction of the comprehension skill.

The criticism directed at the lack of instruction of reading comprehension has been accompanied by the criticism directed at the teaching of writing. In the 1970s, the popular press reported most of the writing done by school children, business people, and government employees was incomprehensible. In 1978, from a report done for the Ford Foundation, Donald Graves had this to say:

> Writing is extolled, worried over, cited as a national priority, but seldom practiced. The problem with writing, is no writing. Reading has been overstressed, often at the expense of writing. Even more serious is our growing insistence that students be solely proficient in receiving information, rather than sending it. This not only hurts writing, but reading as well. In a democracy where we depend on the capacity of citizens to respond, this growing imbalance should be anathema (p. 636).

The National Commission on Excellence in Education, in their 1983 report to the nation, concluded that the education of all children is so deplorable that "Our nation is at risk" (p. 3). These risks are presented in a listing which includes:

> - Some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest tests of everyday reading, writing and comprehension.
> - Many 17-year-olds do not possess the "higher order" intellectual skills . . . nearly 40 percent cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay . . .
> - Business and military leaders complain that they are required to spend millions of dollars on costly remedial education and training programs in such basic skills as reading and writing (p. 4).

Even though the leading proponents of reform favor writing, there has been very little progress and most schools continue to view writing as an aggregate of separate skills most of which center around mastering the use of traditional grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In a study done by Arthur N. Applebee of Stanford University (1981), it was found that high school students were rarely asked to write more than a paragraph, and most of their writing was focused on narrow mechanical tasks.

Applebee and his team of researchers studied writing practices in two midwestern high schools where they observed classroom activities 259 times. These observations were buttressed by a national study in which 13,293 minutes of class time was monitored to see what actual writing took place. This national study surveyed practices in English and in science classes and involved 754 teachers. Applebee listed various writing activities, ranging from journal writing and personal note-taking to mathematical calculations to writing persuasive and argumentative essays. He found that 41% of class time in English classes was devoted to some kind of writing. In science classes the percentage of time devoted to some kind of writing was 48%. In the English classes, 39% of the writing activities were at the mechanical level (e.g., filling in the blanks or providing one- or two-sentence responses). In the science classes, 53% of the writing was at or below the sentence level. Applebee noted the increased time spent on writing in the science classes did not result in writing in the expressive mode, rather, the mechanical writing activities increased correspondingly with the amount of time spent on writing (Applebee, 1981).

Applebee and his researchers also noted that pre-writing activities occurred infrequently. "The average time devoted to preparation for writing averaged just over 3 minutes, time usually spent passing out assignment sheets or answering questions about procedure" (p. 102).

Even though a great deal has been learned about the process of reading and the process of writing, there is still not a balance between the two in most classrooms in our country. Pertinent questions such as the following are being asked repeatedly by many educators:

1. Should reading and writing be perceived and taught as unrelated skills?
2. Should we expect able readers to be competent writers?
3. Should we assume that poor writers are also poor readers or that poor readers are also poor writers?
4. Can schools teach students how to read and comprehend in a way that is helpful in learning how to write and understand prose?
5. Can people acquire through writing, knowledge about written text that will help them comprehend effectively what is read (Aulls, 1985, p. 39)?

The answers to these questions have begun to emerge as evidenced by the recent research of Donald Graves, Mark Aulls, Jane Hansen, Lucy Calkins, and Carmen Collins, to name a few. This research shows, in fact, there is a strong relationship between reading and writing.

Scholars of reading and writing reinforce each other's work in significant ways; reading theory explains how writers and readers comprehend a text while writing theory explains how beginning readers learn to read their own texts. Thus, reading and writing are interwoven as thoughts

become words, words become phrases, phrases sentences, sentences paragraphs and paragraphs pages.

Expressive writing is the writing people do for themselves more than for an external audience. Carmen Collins (1985) uses the term expressive writing synonymously with the terms free or spontaneous writing.

Dan Kirby and Tom Liner in their book, Inside Out, say this about personal writing:

> Personal writing or what James Britton calls expressive writing is the natural place for students to begin their experience with putting words on paper. The student writer's most important inner resources are words to use in talking about personal experience. Start with what they know and feel--and in their own words (Kirby & Liner, 1981, p. 31).

In his book, Writing with Power, Peter Elbow says this about freewriting:

> Freewriting makes writing easier by helping you with the root psychological difficulty in writing; finding words in your head and putting them down on a blank piece of paper. So much writing time and energy is spent not writing: wondering, worrying, crossing out, having second, third, and fourth thoughts. And it's easy to get stopped in the middle of a piece. Frequent freewriting exercises help you learn simply to get on with it and not be held back by worries about whether these words are good words or right words (Elbow, 1981, p. 14).

Expressive writing (long regarded as a frill in many academic circles) is boasting a growing body of research which even the strongest opposition cannot disprove. What previously seemed to be legitimate complaints are overriden by reports of student successes--increased

fluency, enhanced attitudes, and improved writing. Moreover, expressive writing is being credited with improvement in reading comprehension (Collins, 1985).

The teacher of writing is necessarily also a teacher of reading. Writing and reading, often treated quite separately, need to be seen for what they are--"the two sides of the same coin, the coin of literacy" (Walshe, 1979, p. 53). It is through expressive writing that students begin to discover and develop their writing voices. From this evolves a personal style of writing prose which is often accompanied by added order, sense, and meaning--in other words, comprehension (Collins, 1985).

Students who write expressively are thinking on paper. They begin to see relationships, connections, and ideas that were once abstract. As ideas and convictions are strengthened the student begins to develop a stronger sense of self.

> Students who are able to organize their thinking on paper are in a better position to understand another writer's organization of ideas. This is what reading comprehension is all about and what makes expressive writing a teaching tool for reading comprehension (Collins, 1985, p. 52).

One way to get a student into the habit of writing regularly is to have the student keep a journal. A journal is the logical container for verbal images the student wants to keep. A journal is useful for storing and preserving thoughts of all sorts; ideas, bits of information, mental constructs, fresh combinations of words either for serious purposes or for play (Daniel, 1982).

However, a journal is more than a storage place for once-tried

thoughts that the student may or may not haul out and reexamine later. A journal is a laboratory in which the individual can experiment and work with words and sentences. A journal is a place where a student can try out things they might not want to express publicly. A journal is a place to fail, it is a place to explore, and it is a place to question (Tchudi & Tchudi, 1985).

It is not an easy task to get a student to maintain a journal. It can be a short term requirement in the hopes the habit will take hold and grow. The whole point of a journal is that it allows the student to be free and unobserved in the act of writing. The child cannot really break loose in writing unless he or she is sure that the writing will not be read by an unfriendly eye; rather, it needs to be read by someone who will be completely accepting and uncritical.

While journal writing is somewhat more focused than free or expressive writing; it does make use of the expressive mode within structured exercises. Teachers who encourage students to write expressively in the classroom are giving those students an implicit message--the message that they have something important to say (Graves, 1978).

When reading and writing are used together, students become conscious of themselves as writers working through a process rather than readers working through someone else's process.

Statement of the Problem

The Language Arts curriculum in the Fort Dodge Community School System provides for separate instruction in English and in reading.

Prior to the early 1980s, the writing instruction throughout the school system was tradition-bound with major emphasis on the mechanics of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage. Since that time, an effort has been made through curriculum revision to implement a process approach to the teaching of writing. This approach lends itself to the reading-writing relationship.

The 1983-84 school year was the first year for the two middle schools in Fort Dodge to be in operation. Both middle schools include grades 6, 7, and 8. Reading is a required year-long subject for students in each of the three grades. During the initial planning stages for the middle school, a curriculum guide was written for reading. Writing was included, not as an add-on activity, but as an integral component of the reading process.

As the middle school has evolved, two different practices regarding the reading-writing relationship have developed. These are: (1) instructional procedures in which no expressive writing is part of the reading process, and (2) instructional procedures where reading and expressive writing are both parts of the reading process.

These two practices have developed in part because many of the Fort Dodge reading teachers have been involved in the Iowa Writing Project. This writing project was patterned after the Bay Area Writing Project, founded in San Francisco in 1974. The Iowa Writing Project was spearheaded by Dr. James S. Davis, presently with the Grant Wood Education Agency in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Iowa Writing Project is offered through the University of Iowa. Level I of the Iowa Writing Project

was first offered in Fort Dodge during the summer of 1981 and has been offered each summer since that time (James S. Davis, personal communication, February 18, 1986).

Participants in the three-week workshop are guided through the writing process and are offered a personal-experience approach as each person assumes the role of the writer. Class members are also involved in learning about the research and methodologies of noted leaders in the writing community such as Donald Graves, Donald Murray, James Britton, and James Moffett. As a result of this two-fold program focus, the participant not only assumes the persona of the writer but also chooses a teaching design suited to that individual as a writing instructor.

There has been a favorable response to the Iowa Writing Project. Teachers have returned to their classrooms and offered this same personal-experience approach to the students. The focus has thus shifted from the writing product to the writer and the writing process. This has resulted in a positive response from the students. For many students, the act of writing has ceased to be a dreaded affliction visited upon them by an English teacher.

Participation in the Iowa Writing Project is voluntary; therefore, there are some reading teachers who have not taken the summer workshop. Many of the teachers who have taken the Iowa Writing Project encourage students to use expressive writing in their reading classes. The teachers who have not taken the Iowa Writing Project do not have their students write expressively in reading class. As a result, two methodologies coexist within the same basal reading program. This study is

concerned with the Phillips Middle School where both methods exist.

Phillips Middle School in Fort Dodge, Iowa, houses grades 6, 7 and 8. Each respective grade is divided into two academic teams. Within each team the students receive instruction in each of the following curriculum areas: science, social studies, mathematics, reading and English. One reading class from each of the two seventh grades and one reading class from each of the two eighth grade teams were involved in this study. Of the four reading teachers involved in the study, two (one from the seventh grade and one from the eighth grade) have completed Level I of the Iowa Writing Project. The other two (one from the seventh grade and one from the eighth grade) have not been participants in the Iowa Writing Project.

The students placed in reading classes taught by Iowa Writing Project participants were the two experimental groups. The students in the reading classes taught by instructors who had not participated in the Iowa Writing Project were the control groups.

With the two reading methodologies housed in the same middle school the following questions can be asked. Do students who write in conjunction with their reading tasks show greater growth in reading comprehension than the students who do no writing? How does writing or the absence of writing within the same curriculum affect the reading comprehension of students?

Hypotheses

H_A Students who are instructed with a prescribed treatment in the use of reading dialogue journals to do expressive writing will show a significant gain in reading comprehension as compared to students who do no expressive writing.

H_0 There will be no significant difference in the reading comprehension scores between students who do expressive writing in dialogue journals as compared to students who do no expressive writing.

Definitions

1. Journal -- A record of thoughts, impressions, and autobiographical information.
2. Reading Journal -- A notebook or idea book to help the reader clarify, question, or evaluate the printed text.
3. Dialogue Journal -- Journals in which the student and teacher converse in writing about topics of interest to both writers.
4. Expressive Writing -- Free or spontaneous writing on any topic.

Summary

Instructional procedures used in many reading and writing programs have been based on a linear view of language. This view suggests that speaking and listening occur first. Reading follows speaking and listening. Fourth in the sequence is writing. Many schools teach children how to read before they are taught how to write. During the last decade, there has been debate on this issue. A growing body of evidence suggests

reading and writing as interdependent and supportive processes that should be taught together.

Historically, there has always been criticism leveled at the schools. During the 1970s this criticism mushroomed, and many reports and studies reinforced the fact that many students are not capable, qualified readers and writers. This might indicate that integrating the processes of reading and writing would help to produce more capable readers and writers.

The purpose of this study is to gather empirical data using expressive writing as a way of increasing reading comprehension. The study will take place at Phillips Middle School in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> Evidence from early child language studies over the past 25 years supports the view that oral language learning is characterized by the internalization of rules through the mechanism of hypothesis formation and testing. This is a process in which the child generates rules, tests hypotheses, modifies them, and repeats the process. This process begins when young children are exposed to language in a natural situation and begin to perceive its communicative function (Wilson, 1981, p. 897).

Reading, like oral language, should develop quite naturally when opportunities for reading in natural contexts exist. This procedure also operates for writing. Students must be allowed to form their own hypotheses about how written language works. To test their hypotheses they must write. When children are given exposure to print, they will have expectations about the function, purpose, and system of written language as they themselves begin to write (Falk, 1979).

One of the main responsibilities of teachers is helping children build a varied and meaningful vocabulary. A child's environment is permeated by language; he or she meets words in a variety of experiences. Everything a child does demands the use of language. Words are part of what the child is doing--words are the linking sequence of activities in a child's life (Yardley, 1973).

The four topics which comprise the review of literature include: (1) The Reading Writing Relationship, (2) Journals, (3) Expressive Writing, and (4) The Learning Characteristics of the Middle School Child.

The Reading Writing Relationship

By the time children start school, they have a vast amount of language learning behind them. They have learned language is a way of communication and a way of relating to others--relating both their own needs plus their understanding of the needs of others. "Since children already know how to learn language, it is only sensible to teach reading and writing in harmony with that" (Newman, 1982, p. 62).

> The underlying structures and mechanism for reading and writing are language and thought patterns that develop gradually, across years. So too are reading and writing skills developed, as are children's realizations of how these elements mutually support one another (Smith & Dahl, 1984, p. 2).

To prepare children for writing, they must be led to recognize and interpret their own day-by-day activities, "their wondering and daydreaming, and the shared happenings of others, whether witnessed firsthand or found in books" (Phillips & Steiner, 1985, p. 9). Some experiences can be best understood when discovered first in reading: "Empathy, self-understanding, values, and wonder are four of these experiences. They lead the way to a fifth--expression" (p. 9).

Expression lies within every child but usually it takes some outside source to help the child express it. The best effect of any reading is its ability to bring the reader to self-activity. Thus, sharing vicarious experiences, real or created, can inspire expression. Simply stated: reading leads to writing (Phillips & Steiner, 1985).

Recent research presented by Rubin and Hansen (1984) suggests five kinds of knowledge that are critical to expertise in both reading and

writing. These are listed as: (1) informational, (2) structural, (3) transactional, (4) aesthetic, and (5) process. A closer look at this research suggests a relationship which narrows the distinction between reading and writing.

When readers compose messages, they need both the text and information of their own. When writers compose messages they begin with information and use text to convey it. Revision in both reading and writing focuses on information. Structural knowledge comprises knowledge of discourse structure and writing formulas. Writers produce text with structure; readers use the structure when they construct meaning. Transactional knowledge is primarily viewing the text as a means of communication between author and reader. In reading, such knowledge leads to investigating and questioning the author's purpose and style. Aesthetic awareness, or the artistic side of language--its sound and rhythm--also constitutes a strong link between reading and writing. Finally, an awareness of the process by which knowledge is combined will increase proficiency in both areas (Rubin & Hansen, 1984).

Development of both the writing process and the reading process relies heavily on opportunities to use these two skills. Reading comprehension and composing (writing) both require active participation on the part of the learner. The two processes (reading and writing) are brought together by thinking, constructing, and testing ideas.

> The major connection between reading and writing is the constructive mechanism in the mind that acknowledges both the form and substance of what is being read or written. And so the basic strategy that emerges is: Be a reader as you would

> be a writer. But we cannot stop with a generalized dictum, even though it is the heart and mind of the connection. Language concept development, information processing, and an instructional process for reading and writing have to be given bones and flesh in order to give teachers and students a clearer sense of how the reading-writing connection works (Smith & Dahl, 1984, p. 4).

The ideas possessed by learners are revealed through language. Reading and listening enable the learner to expand ideas. Writing and talking enable the learner to show and reconstruct ideas. In other words, the learner builds ideas through reading and puts those ideas into words through writing.

The general sequence for acquiring these four language processes is usually thought to be: listening, speaking, reading, and finally writing (Hall, Moretz, & Statom, 1976). Janet Emig (1977), in her landmark piece of research, prefers to call them first-order and second-order processes. First-order (speaking and listening) are developed without formal instruction; second-order (reading and writing) are developed with instruction. An assumption frequently made by the authors of many basal reading programs (as stated by Emig) is writing is an outgrowth of reading, so reading must occur before writing can begin. This kind of linear progression is the basis for most elementary reading programs.

In reading instruction, the common practice has been to divide reading into three distinct steps: prereading activity, reading for a purpose, and discussion and review. Writing can benefit from a similar three-step division: prewriting, writing for a purpose or intention, and revising. Each of these steps requires similar thinking and class-

room interaction:

> STEP 1: PREREADING/PREWRITING. Step 1 calls for making associations, drawing on background experiences, calling up vocabulary, and bringing the topic into focus. It may require motivational or interest-raising activities. . . . The primary objective of this step is to call forth or to develop ideas about a topic and to select those that appear useful for step 2. It involves getting the mind ready. It is a preview.
>
> STEP 2: READING/WRITING WITH INTENTION. Step 2 calls for reading or writing for personally established purposes. Decisions have to be made about reasons for doing the activity, the intended outcome, and what will guide the mind. The objective of step 2 is to keep the mind focused while reading or writing.
>
> STEP 3: SUMMARIZING AND REVISING. Step 3 calls for the mind to confirm its work. This may be as simple as summarizing what has been read in order to tie ideas together or rereading what has been written to make sure major points have been made. Step 3 also involves adjusting previous perceptions into a different set of ideas and revising the written composition in order to have it communicate more effectively with the intended audience (Smith & Dahl, 1984, p. 17).

These three steps clearly show the reader and the writer as engaged in an enterprise finding out about their world and themselves. Reading, if it is to be a communication, is reading with a sense of writer. And correspondingly, writing, if it is to be a communication is writing with a sense of reader (Holt & Vacca, 1981).

"Young readers and writers must acquire a great deal of print, word, sentence, and text knowledge to produce writing that truly is readable text and to comprehend text at several levels of meaning" (Aulls, 1985, p. 40). The early experiences of reading and writing indicate the novice reader gives the largest proportion of attention to learning how to recognize and process word and sentence units. This attention slowly shifts

to processing and producing text units, which is the sign of a more proficient reader. Expert readers spontaneously and selectively reread parts of the text in order to resolve comprehension problems, contrasted with less proficient or younger readers who seldom reread segments of text to aid comprehension and don't know what to look for when they do (Aulls, 1985).

This process can be compared to novice writers who normally write only one draft without any revisions other than spelling. Novice writers give most of their attention to producing the sentences of a text; little attention is given to the quality of meaning or to organization. If there is any rewriting, it does not consist of revising the original, rather a completely different composition is written. In contrast, expert writers spend as much time revising as they did drafting the original (Aulls, 1985).

To move from the novice reader/writer to that of a proficient reader/writer, the learner must be able to engage in, and go beyond sentence processing to acquiring and using the knowledge of text structure. This requires regular participation in the rereading and revision process. Given sufficient support and opportunity, more expert reader/writers become capable of using and controlling text structures during processing. Donald Murray (1978) makes this observation:

> The complicated and intertwining processes of perception and conception through language involve stages, namely prevision, vision and revision--which, like the complex process wherein they work, are not simple and not rigid. In actual practice . . . these stages overlap and interact with one another (p. 377).

Reading and writing are interdependent processes--necessary to one another and mutually beneficial for one another. As stated by Hoskisson, "Writers will be readers . . . our best readers are our writers. In order to write, a writer has to have a great deal of information about a subject. To get that information, reading must be done" (1979, p. 892).

The novelist, John Hersey, said this regarding the relationship between reading and writing:

> The urge to write is the child of the love of reading. There is absolutely no use in trying to push young people to communicate, to express themselves, to write clear straight sentences . . . unless long before, you have helped them discover the pleasure in reading. Not skill in reading, but pleasure. If there be pleasure in reading, skill in reading will surely come. If there be pleasure in reading, a desire to give that pleasure by writing may also come. That is where good writing begins (1977, p. 53).

Journals

A useful tool in developing the reading-writing relationship is the journal. Many classroom writing instructors find it to be a valuable adjunct in improving student writing (Banks, 1982). Susan and Stephen Tchudi (1984) believe journals are comfortable because the writing is basically private. They see the aim of journal writing as capturing personal perceptions, emotions, and experiences. The goal of journal writing is <u>not</u> to communicate with another person.

The novelist Jessamyn West has said:

> People who keep journals live life twice. Having written something down gives you the opportunity to go back to it over and over, to remember and relive the experience. Keeping a journal can also help you get perspective on your experiences. Sometimes writing something down, like talking about it, helps you understand it better (1957, p. 213).

While there is not one readily agreed-on definition for journals, Kirby and Liner (1981) categorize classroom journals as follows: (1) the writer's notebook, (2) the project journal, (3) the class journal, and (4) the diary. These four categories are more clearly defined as follows.

A writer's notebook is a place for the writer to store ideas, observations, and insights for later use. It is the "writer's workbench--a chronicle of the writer's mind" (Kirby & Liner, 1981, p. 48). The writer's notebook is the journal used most frequently by writing instructors with their students.

The project journal is an efficient way for a student to stay on track during a project that stretches over several weeks. The project journal is a place to log participation in a group activity, a place to record responsibilities and evaluations, and a place to keep track of both long-term and short-term goals. This journal is also useful in the study of a novel or play and in the organization of a research paper.

A third journal, the class journal, is a place where students respond to classroom activities. Exercises and responses are recorded in a class journal as are specific assignments and reflective entries. Most of the entries are short and can be quickly read by an instructor.

The most private of journals is the diary. The diary is what most teachers think of when they hear the word journal. Since it is a private journal, it is the one which must be treated most carefully. This kind of journal has been a therapeutic outlet for many students. A diary cannot be a successful journal unless the written responses of the teacher helps the student to clarify and understand their own thoughts and feelings (Kirby & Liner, 1981).

Since the journal is mainly intended for an audience of one, students can use their journals to write about what they are interested in; as a result, they frequently write for longer periods of time. Because students use the journal to write about the things they find interesting, they often write with clearer, more powerful language.

Fred White (1982) offers a strong defense of journal writing in the teaching of his composition classes at the University of Santa Clara in California. Initially, White presents models of diarists such as Samuel Coleridge, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Anne Frank, and Henry David Thoreau. This modelling familiarizes the students with the journal writing process. White reads and responds to each journal entry made by his students. In justifying this time-consuming response, White states his belief that in doing so, students are convinced of the practical use of the journal and will, therefore, be more enthusiastic about journal writing (White, 1982).

Ed Youngblood, a high school teacher from Georgia, has implemented the use of another type of journal with his English students--the reading journal. Reading encourages thinking, and writing clarifies that

thinking; therefore, Youngblood believes the "relationship is a natural one because the reading journal lets students who actively engage in reading, also actively engage in thinking and feeling" (Youngblood, 1985, p. 46).

The reading journal allows students to make connections between what they read and their own lives. These connections cannot be made without careful reading. After the initial reading-writing connections are made, students can also look for relationships between different literary works and can contrast the writings of different authors. Youngblood emphasizes to his students that they cannot be wrong in their responses since they are recording their own thoughts and feelings (Youngblood, 1985).

When children are given exposure to print, they will have expectations about the function, purpose, and system of written language as they themselves begin to write (Falk, 1979). Dialogue journals are a means of providing these natural functional experiences with both reading and writing. In dialogue journals, the teacher and student converse in writing. On a pre-planned regular schedule, the students write to the teacher and the teacher responds. Using dialogue journals can help children learn to read and write as naturally as they learned to talk.

Each dialogue journal is a private correspondence for just two people. The writing can consist of only a few lines, a question or two, or a thought about something the student has read or written. As trust develops in the student and as interest grows, students share thoughts or respond to questions or suggestions from the teacher's writing

(Phillips & Steiner, 1985).

The teacher's response is a unique feature of the dialogue journal. The teacher responds to each entry by commenting, asking questions, and encouraging the children to express themselves in writing. "As children read the responses, they understand and integrate information and then construct a coherent response. Through their own writing efforts, the children become aware of the basic tools a writer uses to communicate to an audience" (Gambrell, 1985, p. 513).

Children develop an awareness of the purpose of reading and writing as communication processes through dialogue journals. This communication provides the opportunity for a close relationship between the teacher and the student (Gambrell, 1985).

Jessie Roderick and Louise Berman (1984) state teachers have two choices in their relationships with students. One choice is to establish a technical, hierarchical relationship. The second choice is to "come to them as fellow travelers in the search to make teaching a more meaningful activity" (p. 686). Communication with the student as a fellow traveler can be enhanced through the use of dialogue journals.

Dialogue journal writing between students and teachers about self-generated topics of interest provides a means for a "regular systematic look at our own teaching" (Roderick & Berman, 1984, p. 686) and a way of providing support in the teacher-learner relationship. Roderick and Berman asked their English students at the University of Maryland to dialogue with them, as instructors. The commitment of the instructors also led the two of them to dialogue with each other (on a weekly basis)

about the process of dialogue writing with their students. A content analysis of the teacher-teacher entries disclosed the following language functions in the dialogue journals:

1. Hunching/questioning: Tentative, questioning, conditional expression; guessing at outcomes, hypothesizing. (e.g., 'I would hunch the experience would be very helpful to the foreign students.')
2. Describing/elaborating: Stating what is, was or will be; telling course of actions, delineating a situation, extending ideas, subject, or area; making reference to outside sources. (e.g., 'There was an interesting article on this topic in JTE some months ago.')
3. Chaining: Sustaining the dialogue by referring to a prior entry or picking up on an idea expressed earlier. (e.g., 'Yes, I think that activity contributes to personalizing the course.')
4. Reflecting on self: Expressing feelings, hopes, plans, aspirations, intent, preference; more definite in tone than 1. (e.g., 'I ended with a question, and now I have many questions.')
5. Suggesting: Proposing to the other person a course of action, what could or should be done in a declarative, definitive mode. (e.g., 'I'm convinced we should be dealing with concerns like the teachable moment.')
6. Logistics: Make definite reference to the practice of dialogue journal writing, such as critiquing or raising questions about the procedure. (e.g., 'I think we should discuss some possible ways of responding to entries.') (Roderick & Berman, 1984, p. 687-688).

In their analysis of the dialogue process, Roderick and Berman stated the first four (as listed previously) as the predominant language functions. These functions shifted, depending on the role of the initiator or the role of the responder. Both teachers perceived their roles as initiator and responder differently; however, both stated they described and explained more when initiating and chained more to maintain the conversation when responding (1984).

The main assumption stated by Roderick and Berman as related to this dialogue process is journal writing with peers "helped them to see themselves more clearly, which, hopefully would help them understand students more fully" (p. 691).

Expressive Writing

Expressive or free writing is defined by Phillips and Steiner as "writing we want to do rather than writing we have to do" (1985, p. 4). Much of a child's schooling is being told. Expressive writing gives children an opportunity to do some of the telling through writing their thoughts and ideas.

James Britton says this about expressive writing:

> Our experience of chatting with people we know well in a relaxed and loosely structured way is thus a major resource we draw upon when we write expressively. And whether we write or speak, expressive language is associated with a relationship of mutual confidence, trust, and is therefore a form of discourse that encourages us to take risks, to try out ideas we are making a public speech. In other words, expressive language (as a kind of bonus) is a from that favours exploration, discovery, learning (1978, p. 31).

Britton contends all writing begins or flows from the expressive mode of writing. Personal writing is the natural place for students to start with what they feel and what they know in their own words.

Kirby and Liner believe expressive writing can help build confidence in young writers. Many students dislike and fear writing because they have not experienced success:

> Too often we demand that students write about things they care little about (and sometimes know less), and forbid them to use their own natural voices. And then we immediately search out every mistake, large and small, that they make writing within these narrow restrictions. And we worry that our students don't seem to have anything interesting to say, that they despise writing (1981, p. 33).

Through expressive writing many students find their writing voice. Many English/Writing textbooks include definitions for the writing style. Style is actually the writer's voice; it is the way a person talks in writing. Donald Murray (1978) refers to it as a sense of strong recognizable individual in the writing.

Expressive writing helps students write in their own voices about their own areas of authority. According to Donald Graves (1978) this authority is ownership. Donald Murray (1978) believes the student's experience is his or her area of authority.

Expressive writing can be practiced easily in the classroom by having students write in journals. The journal provides the writer (the novice or immature writer in particular) with the regular practice needed to become more comfortable with writing (Kirby & Liner, 1981).

Learning Characteristics of the MIddle School Child

Most middle school educators agree that the middle school youngster is going through both a unique period of life and a critical one. During these 3-4 years (approximately from 11-14 years of age) the child will be confronted with more changes physically, socially, and cognitively than any other time in his or her life. As educators, it is essential

to have as much knowledge as possible about he process of change in order to develop instructional strategies, curriculum design, and educational materials (Swaim, 1982-83).

The studies of Jean Piaget provide a basis for understanding how the early adolescent thinks. Followers of Piaget's theory believe that close to the age of 12, the mind begins to shift from concrete operations to formal operations. At this time, children begin to be able to think abstractly and are ready for higher level cognitive thinking activities which require more and more abstract thinking applications. Most Piagetians also believe that this transition is smooth and fairly consistent among all youngsters (Putbrese, 1982-83).

Piaget's premise that early adolescents are capable of formal logic has influenced educational theory for several decades. This theory has had a variety of effects on classroom teachers. Some instructors reject this theory by citing a small number of students whose actions seem to invalidate the premise. Other teachers question the applicability of the theory because they are themselves concrete operational. Often teachers assign numerous identical problems to solve instead of providing an avenue for the student to move into more sophisticated thinking. Instructional practices like this can cause frustration for some students and boredom for others (Thomason, 1984).

There is a two-fold problem in the assumption that early adolescents are capable of formal thinking operations. First, early adolescents are not isolated in one reasoning stage since they are in a transitional period. Most children during this period operate in the concrete domain;

some use concrete reasoning at times and formal at others. This inconsistency confuses students and frustrates teachers. The second problem is the erratic transition from concrete to formal. This transition is neither spontaneous nor consistent. It is best achieved through teachers who are themselves formal operational and, thus able to prompt the learner's thinking (Thomason, 1984).

The characteristics of the emotional development of the middle school age child have a direct bearing on the child's cognitive development. At this age, self-concept is low and the child is very vulnerable. The child is quick to criticize, but is easily hurt when criticized (Putbrese, 1982-83). "During the Middle School years, students are faced with the changes of physical development (or lack of it), emotional changes, peer pressures, school involvement and parent relationships. All this seems to complicate what adults call 'the best time of your life'" (Kain, 1982-83, p. 39).

The following techniques have been found to be effective with middle school age (early adolescent) children. The techniques address not only the learning characteristics, but also help fill a need in that same child's emotional growth:

1. Lessons should begin with a concrete premise containing examples.
2. Interpretations skills should be practiced in realistic, interesting ways.
3. Selected learning activities should include manipulative objects, charts, pictures, and demonstrations.
4. Students should work together in pairs, triads, or teams on projects.
5. Students should verbalize their thinking process.

6. Teachers should allow reasoning to continue until it takes an illogical turn, then halt the process.
7. Teachers should demonstrate their own intellectual curiosity and present a role model who consistently seeks new information and alternative solutions (Thomason, 1984, p. 4-5).

Summary

The relationship between reading and writing is based on communication. Children learning the written form of language should be producing it as well as reading it. They should be reading and writing. Children should be aware of someone reading their writing, and that what they are reading is someone else's writing.

Journals can be an important part of a child's writing process. The journal gives the child a place to practice; a place to define new ideas and redefine old ones. Journal keeping sustains the habit of writing.

The use of dialogue journals in the classroom provides a natural relationship between reading and writing. Dialogue journals focus on meaning and help children develop an awareness of the purpose of reading and writing as communication processes.

Expressive writing is the act of free or spontaneous writing which can help the student find a core or key idea. Expressive writing can help the student gain confidence and find success. The act of expressive writing gives the child a way to develop a natural writing style--a way of finding his or her own voice.

The preadolescent child has unique and critical needs within the learning environment. Children in this age group are in a transition

period where they fluctuate between the concrete and the formal operational stages. The teaching techniques used in the classroom should address both the learning characteristics and the emotional growth processes of the middle school child.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of dialogue journals on the reading comprehension scores of 7th and 8th grade middle school students. The major premise of reading teachers who have participated in the Iowa Writing Project is that expressive writing is an integral part of the reading process. Reading instructors who have not participated in the Iowa Writing Project tend to view reading and writing as separate parts of the curriculum. This study was an attempt to measure the differences between two distinct reading methodologies within the same curriculum. A prescribed treatment was conducted by teachers who had participated in the Iowa Writing Project. This chapter will delineate the methods used in conducting this investigation.

Target Groups

Four middle school reading classes were used as the target groups for the study. The students in each class were homogeneously grouped and placed on their instructional-reading level in the basal program. Two classes were seventh-graders; the other two were eighth-graders. Each of the classes was located in a different academic team in Phillips Middle School.

Participation of the teacher in the Iowa Writing Project was the determining factor in the selection of the classes to be involved in this study. Two instructors (one seventh-grade and one eighth-grade) had participated in Level I of the Iowa Writing Project. This researcher was the eighth grade experimental teacher. The other two teachers (one

seventh-grade and one eighth-grade) had not been participants. The two classes taught by IWP participants were the two experimental groups; the two classes taught by nonparticipants were the control groups.

In the initial planning stages of the study, the number of students in each of the classes was:

seventh experimental:	24	seventh control:	24
eighth experimental:	18	eighth control:	18
total	42	total	42

The final numbers were as follows:

seventh experimental:	22	seventh control:	22
eighth experimental:	18	eighth control:	15
total	40	total	37

The numbers decreased because there was (1) a decrease in the school population and (2) a high percentage of flu related absenteeism at the time of post testing.

Testing

The procedure followed was the nonequivalent-control-group design:

$$\frac{O_1 \quad X \quad O_2}{O_1 \qquad O_2}$$

In this design, one group, which is exposed to the experimental variable (X) is compared to a similar group not exposed to X. The differences between O_1 and O_2 in the two groups are compared to determine whether X had an effect on the performance of the experimental group as contrasted to the group with no experimental treatment.

Potential threats to the internal validity of the nonequivalent-control-group-design are interaction of the selection of the groups and the maturation of the subjects within the group. The selection of groups can present a problem when these groups are compared. In order to determine the effects of the experimental variable X on the performance of two groups, it is necessary to select homogeneous groups. This homogeneity is difficult to establish. Also, maturation of the subjects within the groups can change. For example, the subjects may grow bored or in the case of a longer experiment, older. These two factors can operate together to influence experimental results (Mason & Bramble, 1978).

The external validity of this design, as in any design where a pre-test is included, results in a possible interaction between testing and the experimental variable. The pre-test may provide a practice for the subjects; therefore, the post-test scores may be higher as a result. There also exists the possibility of an interaction between selection and X in that the experimental group subjects may be especially susceptible to the treatment variable (Mason & Bramble, 1978).

In this experiment, the potential threats to the internal validity were minimized by selecting homogeneous reading groups. (In the Fort Dodge middle schools, all students are placed on their respective instructional level for reading.) Also, the length of time for the experiment (3-1/2 months) would not pose a threat regarding maturation. The length of time of the experiment would also eliminate the possibility of the pre-test as a practice which could influence post-test results.

As a further measure to minimize threats to internal validity the test analysis of covariance test was done to identify any possibility of differences existing in the covariates of the CAT scores, ITBS %ile rank scores and pre-test scores all of which might have affected the mean score of the post-test.

The timeline initially placed pre-testing in October, with post-testing to take place at the end of January. Due to some unexpected changes in the academic team scheduling plus the aforementioned flu outbreak, post-testing was postponed until the week of February 17.

This study was approved by the Human Subjects at Iowa State University. (The approval form is included in Appendix A.)

In mid-October, 1985, a cover letter was mailed to the parents/guardians of the students in all four groups. (A copy of this letter is included in Appendix B.) On October 30-31, a standardized reading comprehension test was administered as a pre-test to the four classes. The instrument chosen was the Gates MacGinitie Reading Test, Level E Form 1. Prior to the test, the students were given a letter explaining the study. (A copy of the letter is included in Appendix B.)

These same students were given a post-test during the week of February 17, 1986. Level E Form 2 of the Gates-MacGinitie was administered as the post-test.

Treatment

Following the pre-test, teachers 7E (Seventh Experimental) and 8E (Eighth Experimental) initiated the following treatment plan during the

daily scheduled reading classes.

A sound filmstrip, The Writer's Journal, (Spectrum Ed. Media) was shown to each class as a means of focusing on the journal as a writer's tool. Both teachers 7E and 8E shared with their classes information from The Young Writer's Handbook (Tchudi & Tchudi, 1984, p. 27-39) on the different aspects of journal writing. A handout entitled "My journal . . . to Free the Writer in Me" was distributed in order to generate enthusiasm and to identify some of the different uses for the journal. (This handout was prepared by Cleo Tilton and LaJean Olsen of Carroll, Iowa.) (A copy of this handout is included in Appendix C.)

To facilitate the major concern of the students ("I don't know what to write"), two 'idea-starter' sheets by Donald Murray (1980) were distributed. These were first introduced to students asstransparencies on the overhead. The purpose of these sheets was to give the students questions to produce writing topics. (Copies of these handouts are included in Appendix C.)

The fourth handout was an excerpt from Ed Youngblood's experience with the use of Reading Journals (1985). This information gave students some directions and reasons to use a reading journal. (A copy of this handout is included in Appendix C.)

The students in the two experimental groups kept spiral notebooks (in their classroom folders) which were used for journal writing. The first 7-10 minutes of classtime was given to journal writing--either freewriting or specific topic choices made by the students from the handout ideas. Journal writing in the spiral notebooks was to be done by

the students three times a week during the course of the study. Regarding the reading journals, the students were advised their entries would not be read by the teacher. (This issue will be addressed more fully in Chapter V.)

As the students settled into the routine of writing in their reading journals, the dialogue journals were introduced. At the beginning of the second week of the study, each student was given a folder which contained a quantity of writing paper, a pen and an invitation. The invitation was a personal letter from the teacher to that student asking him or her to share ideas about books, reading, authors, and writing. The idea for the 'invitation to write' came from a study conducted by Nancie Atwell (1984).

Since dialogue journal writing is designed to encourage written expression, the main focus was on communication. The students were assured there would be no "correcting" of any spelling or usage errors. Both teachers modeled correct form in their responses.

It was assumed the teacher-response would encourage and motivate the students to respond. In the teacher's response, requests were made for more information by posing comments such as "Tell me more about . . .," "Would you describe . . .," "What do you think . . . ."

It was conveyed to the students by both teachers that dialogue journals are private communications. Any sharing done (if the student chose) would be strictly voluntary on that student's part. The dialogue journals were exchanged weekly with an average of 10-12 entries in each folder. The topics discussed between student and teacher focused mainly

on the reading material that was being covered in class as prescribed by the regular curriculum.

At the same time, the two control groups were following the basic curriculum which includes the basal program (book-workbook) and novels taught as thematic units.

Delimitations of the Study

On each academic team the students have an English class in which writing is part of the written curriculum guide. It was understood the students in both the experimental and control groups would receive writing instruction and practice in that particular class.

Because of the participation of many of the middle school teachers (from all subject areas) in one of the writing workshops, the use of journals has become accepted by the students. Because journal writing as a process is known to students, the journal writing required in the two experimental groups was approached with seriousness and task commitment.

The students in the two experimental groups also completed the basic curriculum requirements throughout the treatment. The writing they did was in place of rather than in addition to. Instead of answering basic literal level comprehension questions or doing prescribed workbook/skill-master pages, the students wrote in their journals using the writing treatment plan.

Summary

This chapter on methodology outlined the study and described both the rationale for selecting the experimental and control groups and the prescribed treatment used with the experimental groups. The major purpose of this study was to focus on the two reading methodologies which coexist within the given curriculum. These methodologies have come about because many teachers have participated in the Iowa Writing Project. the nonequivalent-control-group design was the procedure followed. The Gates- MacGinitie Reading Test, Level E Form 1 was administered as a pre-test. The same instrument, Form 2, was given as the post-test. The major focus of the study was to find out if a positive relationship existed between expressive writing and reading comprehension.

CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between writing in the expressive mode and reading comprehension. The hypotheses tested suggested that students who were instructed in the use of reading dialogue journals would show a significant gain in reading comprehension. The subjects for the study were students from Phillips Middle School in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Demographic Data

Table 1 summarizes the data which describe the subjects. There was a total of 77 subjects, 35 male and 42 female. There were 44 seventh graders and 33 eighth graders. The subjects were divided into two test groups with 40 in the experimental group and 37 in the control group. All the students were placed on their respective reading level in the middle school program.

Data were collected on each student for both the Cognitive Abilities Test (Verbal IQ) (Cognitive Abilities Test, 1983) and the Spring 1985 Iowa Test of Basic Skills Reading Comprehension score (Iowa percentile rank norms).

The mean IQ of 75 students (scores were not available for two students) was 107 with 96 as the lowest occurring score and 127 the highest occurring score. Ten percent of the scores fell below 99 and 10% of the scores were above 115. The most frequently occurring score was 109 with 12% of the total occurring at that score. The mean IQ of 107 would

Table 1. Demographic data (N = 77)

Characteristics of Subjects	Frequency	Percent
Grade Level		
Seventh	44	57.1
Eighth	33	42.9
Test Groups		
Experimental	40	51.9
Control	37	48.1
Gender		
Male	35	45.5
Female	42	54.5

indicate an average-ability group of seventh and eighth graders.

The mean percentile rank of 76 students on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills was 58. (There was no score available for one student.) Ten percent of the scores occurred below the 31st percentile and 10% occurred above the 78th percentile. The mean score of 58 would indicate (as did the mean IQ) a group of seventh and eighth grade readers who performed slightly above average.

Reading comprehension for both the experimental and control groups was measured using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Level E (Houghton Mifflin, 1978). Subjects were pre-tested with Form 1 and post-tested with Form 2. Data from the pre- and post-tests were collected and converted to Standard Scores (based on the Normal Curve Equivalents) and also percentile rankings based on national norms.

Table 2 summarizes the mean scores of the pre- and post-reading comprehension tests for both the Standard Scores and the National percentile rank scores. The range from low to high is noted for each test along with the mean and the standard deviation. The scores are shown for the total sample.

Table 2. Mean scores of the total sample on the Gates-MacGinitie Pre- and Post-Tests

Mean Scores			
Pre-Test October 1985		Post-Test February 1986	
Standard Score	Percentile	Standard Score	Percentile
$\bar{X}$ = 59.06 s = 8.35	$\bar{X}$ = 65.41 s = 13.63	$\bar{X}$ = 61.36 s = 11.44	$\bar{X}$ = 68.67 s = 18.41
Low High 37 77 N = 77	Low High 20 90 N = 77	Low High 32 78 N = 74	Low High 20 91 N = 74

t Tests

The statistical procedure t test was utilized to compare the experimental and control groups with regard to the criterion measures of:

1. Standard score on reading comprehension pre-test
2. Percentile on reading comprehension pre-test
3. Standard score on reading comprehension post-test
4. Percentile on reading comprehension post-test
5. Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Iowa percentile rank)
6. Cognitive Abilities Test (Verbal IQ score)

An α level of .01 was selected to judge these tests of means.

Table 3 gives the means, standard deviations, F tests (for variance) with accompanying probability level, and the appropriate t test with accompanying probability level for these six comparisons.

As seen in Table 3 there is no significant difference between the experimental and control groups' means for:

	EXP $\bar{X}$	CONTROL $\bar{X}$
1. CAT	108.17	107.45
2. ITBS	60.07	56.19
3. PRE-TEST STANDARD SCORE (GM)	59.90	58.16
4. PRE-TEST %ILE RANK SCORE (GM)	66.77	63.94

The same table also reveals no significant difference in variances between the groups except for the Cognitive Abilities Test. The researcher is thus led to believe that the experimental and control groups were basically equal at the beginning of the experiment.

When considering post-experiment measures, Table 3 reveals highly significant ($p<.01$) differences between the experimental and control groups for both mean and variance on:

	Exper. $\bar{X}$	Cont. $\bar{X}$	Exper. s	Cont. s
1. GM Post-test Standard Score	68.76	53.55	6.28	10.45
2. GM Post-test Percentile Rank Score	80.50	56.19	8.39	17.91

It is noted that the experimental groups scored significantly higher on the average than did the control groups and that they also exhibited

Table 3. t test Group 1 Experimental Group 2 Control

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	F value	2-Tail Prob.	Appropriate t Model t value	d.f.	2-Tail Prob.
CAT Scores								
Group 1	40	108.17	7.32	2.09	0.031	0.50	69.50	0.620
Group 2	35	107.45	5.07					
ITBS %ile								
Group 1	40	60.07	16.04	1.06	0.845	1.04	74	0.300
Group 2	36	56.19	16.56					
Standard Score Pre-test Gates-MacGinitie								
Group 1	40	59.90	9.07	1.46	0.254	0.91	75	0.360
Group 2	37	58.16	7.51					
Percentile Pre-test Gates-MacGinitie								
Group 1	40	66.77	14.25	1.21	0.572	0.91	75	0.360
Group 2	37	63.94	12.97					
Standard Score Post-test Gates-MacGinitie								
Group 1	38	68.76	6.28	2.76[a]	0.003	7.53[a]	56.80	0.001
Group 2	36	53.55	10.45					
Percentile Post-test Gates-MacGinitie								
Group 1	38	80.50	8.39	4.56[a]	0.001	7.41[a]	49.05	0.001
Group 2	36	56.19	17.91					

[a] $p < .01$.

less variability than did the control groups. An interesting observation is that the control group scores actually dropped on the post-test.

Analysis of Covariance

The data were also subjected to a single classification analysis of covariance to test the following null hypothesis: There will be no significant difference in the reading comprehension post-test achievement when initial differences between the two groups have been adjusted with respect to ITBS, Verbal IQ (CAT) and the pre-test reading comprehension scores. This adjustment compensates for initial differences between the groups on the control variables. This hypothesis was tested twice using both post-test standard scores and post-test percentile scores as the dependent measure of achievement.

Tables 4 and 5 summarize the analysis of covariance tests. It can be noted a significant F was yielded in each case. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for each dependent variable.

In order to be certain which group is significantly superior, the adjusted mean must be studied. After controlling for the covariates, the adjusted reading percentile rank means for the groups are as follows. A mean of 68.94 is reported for the total sample group on the percentile rank. The adjusted mean for the experimental group is reported as 79.96, whereas, the adjusted mean for the control group drops to 56.62. An inspection of the adjusted mean shows that students in the experimental group performed significantly ($p<.01$) better than the students in the control group.

Table 4. Analysis of covariance of experimental and control reading comprehension achievement measured by Gates-MacGinitie percentile rank on the post-test

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Covariates				
PERPRE	2,603.594	1		
CAT	7.086	1		
ITBS	249.706	1		
Treatment				
Exp vs. Control	9,664.254	1	9,664.254	65.267[a]
Explained	14,406.969	4	3,601.742	
Residual	9,920.809	67	148.072	
TOTAL	24,327.778	71	342.645	

[a] $p < .01$.

Table 5. Analysis of covariance of experimental and control reading comprehension achievement measured by Gates-MacGinitie standard score on the post-test

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Covariates				
SSPRE	1,013.641	1		
CAT	1.256	1		
ITBS	121.938	1		
Treatment				
Exp vs. Control	3,692.432	1	3,692.432	65.673[a]
Explained	5,638.809	4	1,409.702	
Residual	3,767.066	67	56.225	
TOTAL	9,405.875	71	132.477	

[a] $p < .01$.

A study of the adjusted means on the post-test standard scores reveals a mean of 61.54 for the total sample group. The adjusted mean for the experimental group is reported as 68.36, whereas, the adjusted mean for the control group drops to 53.92. This adjusted mean on the standard score shows that students in the experimental group performed significantly better than the students in the control group.

This research study would support the use of dialogue journals as a teaching tool to increase reading comprehension.

Summary

Data analysis of a reading-writing relationship study was the focus of this chapter. The study was conducted at Phillips Middle School in Fort Dodge, Iowa. The research hypothesis tested was: Students who were instructed in the use of dialogue journals in reading classes would show a significant increase in reading comprehension as compared to students who did not use dialogue journals in reading class. The treatment period started in October, 1985, and ended in February, 1986.

Data were collected regarding Verbal IQ (CAT) and ITBS scores. Reading comprehension was measured with alternate forms of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test, Level E. The two experimental groups were instructed by teachers who had been participants in the Iowa Writing Project. The writing done by the students in the experimental groups was in place of rather than in addition to; instead of doing workbook pages or skillsheets, the experimental groups wrote in their journals. Students in both the experimental and control groups followed

the basic curriculum throughout the treatment period. Each group met with their respective reading teacher 42 minutes per day.

T tests were run on all the collected data including CAT scores, ITBS scores, pre-test scores, and post-test scores. Highly significant differences between the means of the scores from the two groups affirmed the basic assumption made in this study: the act of expressive writing when included in reading methodology would increase reading comprehension as compared to reading methodology which does not include expressive writing.

Another statistical procedure, the single analysis of covariance, was run to identify any possibility of differences existing in the co-variants of the CAT scores, ITBS percentile rank, and pre-test scores which might have affected the mean score of the post-test. This test also yielded a highly significant difference in the mean scores of the two groups.

The null hypothesis was rejected, and the assumption that expressive writing increases reading comprehension was verified.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The basic premise of this study was to examine the reading-writing relationship. The specific focus of the study was to determine if a significant difference existed between a sample group of students who wrote expressively in dialogue journals as part of the reading methodology as compared to another sample group who did no expressive writing in their reading class.

The statistical analysis of this study showed that reading methodology which incorporates expressive writing results in significant improvement in students' reading comprehension.

This chapter will include: conclusions which can be made from the study, a discussion of observations resulting from the methodology, and some recommendations and implications for further classroom use.

Conclusions

The t test was used to determine if a significant difference existed between a sample group of students who wrote expressively in their reading classes as compared to another sample group who did no expressive writing. The analysis of the data resulted in the conclusion that highly significant changes occurred (in the two classrooms) where expressive writing was part of the reading methodology.

The data were further subjected to a single classification analysis of covariance. This test was run to adjust the initial differences between the two groups with respect to ITBS, Verbal IQ (CAT), and the

Gates-MacGinitie pre-test scores. The main effects of the experimental and control groups, after removing any initial differences on the control variable, still resulted in a highly significant difference. The statistical analysis of this study showed that reading methodology which incorporates expressive writing, results in statistically significant improvement in students' reading comprehension achievement.

While the significant results for the experimental group cannot be discounted, it should be noted the results may have been confounded because of expectations placed on the students by the experimental teachers. The enthusiasm of the teachers may have been a contributing factor in this study.

Likewise, there exists the possibility of a halo effect. In other words, students in the experimental groups may have exhibited a mroe positive attitude toward the treatment plan resulting from the knowledge of both teachers and students that the course was somehow special.

The reader should note this researcher can make no specific conclusion regarding the drop in mean scores for the control group on the post-test measures. it was assumed both teachers followed the prescribed curriculum. It has previously been noted that neither of the control group teachers had been participants in the Iowa Writing Project. To attribute specific causes for the drop in mean scores would go beyond what is contained in the data.

The results can be interpreted by observing the two experimental group instructors who have both been participants in the Iowa Writing Project. Most teachers who have participated in the IWP return to the

classroom with new ways to incorporate expressive writing as part of their teaching methodology. Expressive writing, as an extension of 'self', can become a viable teaching tool as well as a means of creating new avenues of communication with students. Thus nurturing philosophy is practiced by the instructors of the two experimental reading classes. For many teachers, this results in a dedication to writing, not only as a basic skill to be taught, but as an art and an ongoing process to be practiced and continually perfected.

The results of the study can also be interpreted by reviewing made by the students in reply to a question asked by the two experimental group teachers: What was the importance of the dialogue journal? In response, a listing of some of their answers follows:

- I think my attitudes towards writting (sic) have changed because I like writing in this dialogue journal.
- It's an easy way to express my feelings by writing in this dialogue journal. I want to continue it. I think we get to know each other better.
- Writing in the dialogue journals has made me feel differently about reading. At the beginning of the year I never had time to read; but now I make time. I hope we keep writing in these dialogue journals.
- A lot of my ideas about reading and writing have changed this year. This book makes it easy to express yourself.
- I would like to keep writing to you in this dialogue journal. I think what was important about the journals was that we could ask questions about the novels we were reading in class.

> · A lot of my ideas about writing have changed this year. I used to never like to write; it seemed like teachers pushed you to write about their ideas. This year I like to write because we can do it anytime we want. I like the dialogue journals very much. It's fun to write to you about books, then you write back with your coments (sic) and opinions.

Written permission was given by the students to use some of their ideas and quotes from the dialogue journals. (A copy of the release form is included in Appendix D.)

The dialogue journal offered the students a safe place--a place to question, to explore, to analyze and evaluate--a place to write. This security, offered in a literate classroom environment, proved to be a catalyst for improved feelings of self in regard to both reading and writing.

There are many different opinions found in literature on journal writing regarding teacher-response to student journals. The reading journals kept by the experimental groups proved to be only of secondary importance. Both groups of experimental students had been advised that the reading journals kept in class folders would not be read by the aeachers. As the treatment plan gained momentum most students used their class-writing time to respond in their dialogue journals. The reading journal did not offer the students the same comfort zone as did the dialogue journal.

Discussion

The use of dialogue journals in the classroom helps children to develop an awareness of reading and writing as communication processes.

These journals, also, are a way to focus on the natural relationship between reading and writing with the creation of meaning as the primary goal.

At the onset of the treatment period, many students revealed a strong sense of inadequacy as readers and writers. Many of their entries were filled with excuses and/or apologies. Some examples are as listed:

- It seems like everyone but me can write . . . it's maybe just a mental block. What do you think?
- I like to write but I don't like my handwriting.
- My attitude about writing is if I can get away without doing it I will.
- I might just as well come out and say it, I HATE reading books. I can't picture things in my head. . .
- I don't read much at all. It seems I don't have time or I don't want to make time.
- I don't read very often because I'm not good at visualizing.
- I hate reading books with long chapters.
- Writers should start their books more fascinating and use lower vocabulary. Then I'd read more.

Children enter school with a vast amount of language learning behind them. Most of them already know language is a way to talk to others. It should, therefore, be dictated by logic that children be helped to move beyond what they already know. Teaching children self-expression should be part of the language process.

Many children learn very soon after entering school that reading and writing are synonymous with pleasing the teacher. They are able to do this with properly formed letters of the alphabet, correct spellings, and neatly filled out exercise sheets and workbook pages. From the very beginning of primary grades a race exists. The good or top students pull ahead, the average students are categorized in the middle and, of course, some fall to the bottom. This race follows an 'exercise-by-exercise' course which keeps many children in the same relative position: top, middle, and bottom. Many years of running the same track without gaining any ground reinforces feelings of failure and negates self-motivation on the part of the student. These negative feelings are readily observed in the initial entries written by students in the experimental groups.

While the dialogue journals require a definite time commitment, the benefits that come from involving children in meaningful reading and writing experiences make the journals worthwhile for both student and teacher.

There is evidence that the needs of the middle school age child can be met with the use of the dialogue journal. A closer examination of some effective techniques for teaching early adolescent children (Chapter II) reinforces the use of dialogue journals (i.e., Items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7).

Item 1. Lessons should begin with a concrete premise containing examples.

Example: The written invitation given to the children at the onset of the treatment contained many concrete ideas and examples to write about. Not one student hesitated or encountered difficulty finding something to write in their initial entries.

Item 2. Interpretation skills should be practiced in realistic, interesting ways.

Example: Both the teachers attempted to write realistic and interesting responses to the students; as a result, students modeled those responses.

Item 5. Students should verbalize their thinking process.

Example: The students verbalized (in writing) their thinking processes as they postured, questioned, hypothesized, and generalized.

Item 6. Teachers should allow reasoning to continue until it takes an illogical turn, then halt the process.

Example: Any illogical thinking appeared to be the result of the exploring done while students worked through a problem or situation which needed clarifying. Both teachers noted making responses to differentiate between illogical and reasonable.

Item 7. Teachers should demonstrate their own intellectual curiosity and present a role model who consistently seeks new information and alternative solutions.

Example: The teachers, as role models in the dialogue journal format, could provide a multitude of responses encouraging ways to find new information through reading and new solutions through writing.

In the study done by Roderick and Berman (Chapter II, 1984), a content analysis was made of their teacher-to-teacher dialogue journals. Many student entries (Fort Dodge study) dovetail closely with the language functions elicited by Roderick and Berman. Following are four

of these language functions with a corresponding Fort Dodge student example for each:

1. Hunching/questioning

   Example: What does biased mean? I'd really like to know. Also, what desert does this take place in? If you don't know where just tell me on which continent you think it is. Also, Ben is stupid, why doesn't he get a lawyer and how could the whole town believe Madec's assinine (sic) story?

2. Describing/elaborating

   Example: The book I'm reading is about a boy who has to wear glasses. He thinks they make his ears stick out, so he makes up a lot of (not true) things so he won't have to wear them. It's funny - it's untrue, but to me it's not untrue.

3. Chaining

   Example: Deathwatch is getting better. I didn't understand what happened in the helicopter incident until you told me when you wrote back. I couldn't figure out who he was or why he left . . it kinda makes more sense now. Thanks for telling me.

4. Reflecting on self

   Example: My Side of the Mountain is one of the best books I've read. I don't enjoy reading, but this is a book I can identify with and like reading.

   Example: At the moment I don't have any feelings about Deathwatch because today I'm not into it but my next letter I will talk about that. Footfalls (from those new books you brought out) was really good because I'm trying to run long distance for track and that had alot about running in it.

The Roderick and Berman study also poses a solution to a problem encountered in the Fort Dodge study. Because of different schedules for the seventh grade and eighth grade, there was no common planning

time for the two experimental group teachers. The teacher-to-teacher dialogue journals could have helped to alleviate the problem.

The increase in the reading comprehension achievement supports the idea that reading and writing are closely related. During the study the teachers of the two experimental groups asked the students to explore the ways in which reading and writing are connected. Entries made in their dialogue journals on this topic were varied.

Some of the entries were short statements simply affirming some kind of relationship, but not knowing implicitly how to define the connection. A few students responded with the obvious relationship: a reader is a writer and a writer is a reader. Many students explored the possible connections in more depth:

- I think that if I am reading a book and I write about it, it helps me to understand the book.
- . . . if I read what someone else has written, I can put more feeling into my own writing.
- When I see how others write, it inspires me to write like that with a combination of my own writing - then it sounds good.
- When I write about what I read, I see how much I've learned. Otherwise I don't think about it.
- It seems that reading it first is kinda an example. So when you write you can follow the pattern but use different words. Reading a lot gives you a better imagination and helps a lot on your vocabulary.

A closer examination of the student entries reveals the idea that writing can bring order and understanding to the thinking process. As students organize their thinking on paper, they are in a good position

to recognize another writer's organizational patterns. This type of modeling reinforces the structural patterns conducive to growth in both reading and writing.

Durkin's study (Chapter I) revealed a disproportionately small amount of time devoted to the actual teaching of comprehension skills in both reading and social studies classes. The dialogue journal is one solution to what appears to be a definite weakness in actual contact time spent teaching comprehension in the classroom.

The teacher's role in the dialoguing process can reinforce, explain, sequence, clarify, infer, draw comparisons and contrasts, make conclusions and question. The students basically follow the same pattern as they model the teacher in their own responses. Comprehension techniques are automatically postured by the teacher in a natural, easy-to-understand format. The students as reader-writers gain in comprehension as they gain confidence and understanding of their own thinking processes.

In a review of the British Primary schools Sir Alec Clegg wrote, "Right personal relationships and right attitudes will do more for education than all the gadgets, kits, tests, workbooks, imposed discipline and rules in the world" (Clegg, 1971, p. 43).

The dialogue journal, as used in the classrooms in this study, would appear to provide the necessary ingredients to achieve both.

Recommendations

It would appear, as a result of this study, achievement in reading comprehension was increased for students in the experimental group through the use of dialogue journals. More research in this area is needed and should be encouraged by persons in the reading-writing community.

It is the opinion of this researcher that dialogue journals can be a functional teaching tool; however, a word of caution is deemed necessary. A great deal of understanding and facilitating is necessary to insure the sense of privacy and security needed by the students. A teacher interested in the implementation of dialogue journals must be cognizant of both the affective and cognitive needs of the students. Inservice should be made available for teachers interested in the implementation of dialogue journals.

The personal biases of this researcher lead to suggestions which could help establish a classroom climate that focuses on the reading-writing relationship. It is the researcher's belief that the underlying philosophy which serves as the foundation for reading and writing as a recursive process is directly related to the premise that 'writing is a way of knowing' and a 'way of learning.'

Based on these personal beliefs, there are several suggestions which can be made for teachers, administrators, and fellow-educators who are interested in furthering the reading-writing relationship:

1. Participation in the Iowa Writing Project (or similar writing projects) should be encouraged for all reading and language

arts teachers.

2. Involvement of administrators in writing projects (either as participants or through active support) can help provide a network of educators who value and promote writing.
3. Informing parents (through newsletters, conferences and open-house) that teachers of reading are also teachers of writing just as teachers of writing are also teachers of reading.
4. Providing in each classroom an atmosphere which allows children to 'play with' and explore the growth of language processes. This is of prime importance in establishing literate environments.
5. Working together (teachers, administrators, and curriculum directors) to allow time (both school-wide and within the individual classroom) for sustained silent reading and free writing. This can be an important step in promoting a literate environment.

This study showed that dialogue journals are a realistic workable teaching tool that can serve a definite purpose in the areas of reading and writing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Richard. (1983, August). Reading: Methods and materials that motivate. Learning, 32-33.

Applebee, Arthur N. (1977, April). Writing and reading. Journal of Reading, 20, 534-537.

Applebee, Arthur N. (1981). Writing in the secondary schools. NCTE Report No. 21. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Applebee, Arthur N. (1982). Writing and learning in school settings. In Martin Nystrand (Ed.), What writer's know: The language process and structures of written discourse. New York: Academic Press.

Applebee, Arthur N. & Langer, Judith A. (1983, February). Instructional scaffolding: Reading and writing as natural language activites. Language Arts, 60, 168-175.

Atwell, Nancie. (1984, March). Writing and reading literature from the inside out. Language Arts, 61, 240-252.

Aulls, Mark. (1985). Understanding the relationship between reading and writing. Educational Horizons, 64, 39-44.

Banks, Sherry. (1982, Summer). The journal - tool for developing writing skills. The Writing Instructor, 1, 159-161.

Blackburn, Ellen. (1984, April). Common ground: Developing relationships between reading and writing. Language Arts, 61, 367-375.

Britton, James. (1978). The composing processes and the functions of writing. In Charles Cooper and Lee Odell (Eds.), Research on composing: Points of departure. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. (1983, September). Making the reading-writing connection. Learning, 82-86.

Carroll, John B. (1984). The nature of the reading process. In Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay (Eds.), Readings on reading instruction (p. 30). New York: Longman.

Clegg, Sir Alec. (1971). Revolution in the British primary schools. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association.

Cognitive Abilities Test. (1983). Thorndike, Robert L. and Hagen Elizabeth. Chicago: Riverside.

Collins, Carmen. (1985, January). The power of expressive writing in reading comprehension. Language Arts, 62, 48-54.

Daniel, Neil. (1982, Jan.-Feb.). The challenge of writing: Tactics for teaching gifted students. Gifted Child Quarterly, 21, 53-56.

DeFord, Diane E. (1981, September). Literacy: Reading, writing, and other essentials. Language Arts, 58, 652-658.

Durkin, Delores. (1978-1979). What classroom observations reveal about reading comprehension instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, 14, 481-533.

Elbow, Peter. (1981). Writing with power. New York: Oxford University Press.

Emig, Janet. (1977, May). Writing as a mode of learning. College Composition and Communication, 28, 122-128.

Falk, Julia. (1979, December). Language acquisition and the teaching and learning of writing. College English, 41, 438-447.

Gambrell, Linda B. (1985, Feb.). Dialogue journals: Reading-writing interaction. The Reading Teacher, 38, 512-515.

Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests. (1978). MacGinitie, Walter. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Goldsmith, E. (1981). Fostering fluent readers and writers. (Report No. CS007892). U.S.: New York. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 252 822).

Graves, Donald. (1978, May). We won't let them write. Language Arts, 56, 635-640.

Gusznak, Frank. (1967). Teacher questioning and reading. Reading Teacher, 21, 227-234.

Hall, Mary Anne, Moretz, Sara A., & Statom, Jodellan. (1976, May). Writing before grade one - a study of early writers. Language Arts, 53, 582-585.

Hersey, John. (1977, Spring). Partnership in pleasure in teaching writing - advice from professionals. Journal of Connecticut Council of Teachers of English, 146-149.

Holt, Suzanne L., & Vacca, Jo Anne L. (1981, December). Reading with a sense of writer: Writing with a sense of reader. Language Arts, 58, 937-941.

Hoskisson, Kenneth. (1979, November/December). Writing is fundamental. Language Arts, 56, 892-896.

Kain, James. (1982-83). Advisor/advisee. Middle Level Educators Bulletin, 39-40.

Kirby, Dan & Liner, Tom. (1981). Inside out developmental strategies for teaching writing. Montclair, NJ: Boynton Cook.

Mason, Emanuel J., & Bramble, William J. (1978). Understanding and conducting research: Applications in education and the behavioral sciences. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Moxley, Roy. (1984, April). The compositional approach to reading in practice and theory. Journal of Reading, 27, 636-643.

Murray, Donald. (1978, December). Write before writing. College Composition and Communication, 29, 375-381.

Murray, Donald. (1980, December). The handout page. English Journal, 69, 67.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983, April). A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. Washington, D.C.: Department of Education.

Newman, Robert E. (1982). Reading, writing, and self-esteem. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Petty, Walter, & Bowen, Mary E. (1967). Slithery snakes and other aids to children's writing. New York: Meredith Corporation.

Phillips Kathleen C., & Steiner, Barbara. (1985). Creative writing: A handbook for teaching young people. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Pitts, Beverley, & Guffin, Jan. (1984, Spring). The write right image. Journal of Teaching Writing, 3, 7-13.

Polette, Nancy, & Hamlin, Marjorie. (1975). Reading guidance in a media age. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

Popham, James W., & Sirotnik, Kenneth A. (1973). Educational statistics use and interpretation (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Harper Row.

Putbrese, Larry. (1982-83). Developmental characteristics of early adolescents. Middle Level Educators Bulletin, 4, 12-17.

Reasoner, Charles F. (1975). When children read. New York: Dell.

Roderick, Jessia A., & Berman, Louise M. (1984, November). Dialoguing about dialogue journals. Language Arts, 61, 686-692.

Rubin, Andee, & Hansen, Jane. (1984). Reading and writing: How are the first two R's related? Illinois University, Urbana. Center for the Study of Reading (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 248 464).

Ruddell, Robert B. (1984). Language instruction: Innovative practices. In Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay (Ed.), Readings on reading instruction (p. 283). New York: Longman.

Smith, Carl, & Dahl, Karin. (1984). Teaching reading and writing together: The classroom connection. New York: Teachers College Press.

Smith, Frank. (1981, October). Myths of writing. Language Arts, 58, 792-798.

Smith, Myrna. (1977, May). Bruner on writing. College Composition and Communication, 28, 129-133.

Sulzby, Elizabeth, & Teale, Wm. H. (1985, Fall). Writing development in early childhood. Educational Horizons, 64, 8-12.

Swaim, John H. (1982-83). Middle school: An emphasis on the development of the total child. Middle Level Educators Bulletin, 4, 1-6.

Tchudi, Susan, & Tchudi, Stephen. (1984). The young writer's handbook. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Thomason, Julia. (1984, August). Nurturing the nature of early adolescents--or a day at the zoo. Middle School Journal, 15, 3-6.

Walshe, R. D. (1979, December). What's basic to teaching writing? Language Arts, 57, 51-56.

West, Jessamyn. (1957). To see a dream. New York: Harcourt Brace.

White Fred. (1982, Summer). Releasing the self: Teaching journal-writing to freshmen. The Writing Instructor, 1, 147-154.

Williams, Joanna. (1984). Reading instruction today. In Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay (Ed.), Readings on reading instruction (p. 18). New York: Longman.

Wilson, Marilyn J. (1981, May). A review of recent research on the integration of reading and writing. The Reading Teacher, 34, 896-901.

Yardley, Alice. (1973). Exploration and language. New York: Citation Press.

Youngblood, Ed. (1985, September). Reading, thinking, and writing using the reading journal. English Journal, 74, 46-48.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Elaine McNally Jarchow for guiding me through this project. I owe Dr. Tony Netusil a special thanks for his role as my statistics mentor. I appreciate the time and effort the other committee members, Dr. Mike Simonson and Lee Hadley.

To my colleague, Pat Loots who worked with me to implement and carry out the treatment plan, I am especially grateful. Her commitment, interest, expertise, and caring attitude helped make it possible to complete the project.

I am indebted to my principal, J. Phillip Wormsley, for his support and interest.

I owe my family and good friends a special thanks for providing the supportive environment in which I worked to complete this project.

INFORMATION ON THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
(Please follow the accompanying instructions for completing this form.)

69

1. Title of project (please type): The Effect of Reading/Dialogue Journals on Seventh and Eighth Graders Reading Comprehension

2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected. Additions to or changes in procedures affecting the subjects after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review.

Typed Named of Principal Investigator	Date	Signature of Principal Investigator
Sharon Wolter	10/7/85	Sharon Wolter

Campus Address	Campus Telephone
322 N. 26th Pl. Fort Dodge, IA 50501	515-573-5881

OCT 10 '85 GRADUATE COLLEGE ISU

3. Signatures of others (If any)

Signatures of others (If any)	Date	Relationship to Principal Investigator
Elaine Jarchow	10/9/85	MAJOR PROFESSOR

4. ATTACH an additional page(s) (A) describing your proposed research and (B) the subjects to be used, (C) indicating any risks or discomforts to the subjects, and (D) covering any topics checked below. CHECK all boxes applicable.

OCT 18 '85 GRADUATE COLLEGE ISU

- ☐ Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
- ☐ Samples (blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
- ☐ Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
- ☐ Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
- ☐ Deception of subjects
- ☒ Subjects under 14 years of age and(or) ☐ Subjects 14-17 years of age
- ☐ Subjects in institutions
- ☐ Research must be approved by another institution or agency

5. ATTACH an example of the material to be used to obtain informed consent and CHECK which type will be used.

- ☐ Signed informed consent will be obtained.
- ☐ Modified informed consent will be obtained.

6. Anticipated date on which subjects will be first contacted: Month Oct. Day 30 Year 1985

Anticipated date for last contact with subjects: Month Jan. Day 21 Year 1986

7. If Applicable: Anticipated date on which audio or visual tapes will be erased and(or) identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments: Month ____ Day ____ Year ____

8. Signature of Head or Chairperson: [signature] Date: 10/14/85 Department or Administrative Unit: Prof Studies in Education

9. Decision of the University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research:

☒ Project Approved ☐ Project not approved ☐ No action required

Name of Committee Chairperson	Date	Signature of Committee Chairperson
George G. Karas	10/21/85	[signature]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

October, 1985

Dear Students,

As many of you are aware, I am finishing my graduate work At Iowa State University. In order to earn my Master's Degree I will be doing a research project.

Research involves testing a theory in order to either prove it correct or to say it doesn't work. You are going to be part of my theory testing. My theory is related to the reading/writing relationship. You will be involved in a variety of writing experiences; dialogue journals in which you will converse in writing with the teacher, responding to what you read in ways you might find new and interesting, and your own personal journal writing using your own ideas plus idea-seeds given to you in class.

Your tasks won't be difficult and it will take nothing away from the regular reading program. You might even find it to be challenging...! I will be glad to share my results with you later in the school year. We will be starting after conferences are over. Your parents/guardians will be receiving a letter similar to this in the mail this week so you can keep this in your folder.

Ms. Wolter

Approved for Committee
10/29/85

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PHILLIPS MIDDLE SCHOOL
1015 Fifth Avenue North
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501

October, 1985

Dear Parents/Guardians,

By way of introduction, my name is Sharon Wolter. I have been a reading instructor for fourteen years in the Fort Dodge schools. At the present time, I am doing graduate work at Iowa State University to earn a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instructional Technology with an emphasis in Reading and Writing.

In the very near future I will be conducting a study that deals specifically with the reading-writing relationship. There will be approximately fifty seventh-graders and fifty eighth-graders involved in the study. A standardized reading test (pre and post) will be given to these students. This study will follow the basic curriculum and will be used in conjunction with our new D.C. Heath American Readers. The research will in no way alter the regular reading curriculum. In my study I will be reporting group results; your child's name will not be used in my study.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Also, I will be glad to share the findings of my study with you if you are interested. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Sharon Wolter
Sharon Wolter
Phillips Middle
School

RELEASE FORM

I understand in signing this form that some of my ideas and quotes from my writing will be published. My name will not be given with my writing.

_____
Student Signature

_____
Parent Signature